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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-second year

Identical letters dated 17 December 2007 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write with regard to the alarming Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel, which were carried out over the recent weekend.

Yesterday, Sunday, 16 December 2007, a Qassam rocket fired by Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip scored a direct hit on a house in Kibbutz Zikim, an Israeli communal farm less than a mile from Gaza, and wounded a two-year-old boy. The boy and his mother, who needed treatment for trauma and shock, were rushed to a nearby hospital. Their home was also destroyed in the rocket attack.

On Friday evening, 14 December, Palestinian terrorists in the Gaza Strip fired a rocket that slammed into a kibbutz factory, destroying equipment. Another rocket hit the same kibbutz almost 24 hours later.

These rocket attacks, like the other daily barrage fire, were intentionally aimed at Israeli towns and civilian populations, in order to inflict death and damage and instil fear and intimidation. Moreover, this terrorist activity is in blatant violation of international law, and those responsible, directly and indirectly, must not be allowed to continue with impunity.

Israel views these terrorist attacks with grave severity, particularly as Israeli and Palestinian leaders met last week to commit to moving negotiations forward. The rocket attacks are a deliberate attempt by the enemies of peace, like Hamas, to derail the peace process. Since Hamas violently took control of the Gaza Strip in June 2007, 353 rockets and 554 mortars have been fired at Israeli cities, a sign of Hamas' intransigence and refusal to embrace the three conditions of the Quartet. The Palestinian Authority must end the violence and terrorism against Israel, as is required according to its obligations under the road map. All States in the region should refrain from supporting this terrorist activity.

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Israel retains the right to exercise itself in self-defence, as is the right of all sovereign nations, under article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Israel will continue to do all that is necessary to safeguard the lives of its citizens and ensure their right to live free from fear and terrorism.

I should be grateful if you would have the contents of the present letter circulated as a document of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17, and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Daniel **Carmon**
Ambassador
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.